

## 85 TEST AND EVALUATION SQUADRON



### MISSION

The 85 Test and Evaluation Squadron, located at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., is responsible for conducting operational test and evaluation and tactics development and evaluation programs for F-15C, F-15E, and F-16CG/CJ aircraft. Utilizing specially instrumented aircraft, the 85 evaluates current and future weapons, and associated electronic warfare subsystems. The 85 TES tests and evaluates the newest air-to ground munitions, air-to-air missiles, electronic warfare systems, and associated subcomponents and avionics. It provides operational fighter expertise to U.S. Air Force Headquarters, DoD agencies, and the aerospace industry in the development of future aircraft and employment techniques and concepts. The 85's core competencies are air to-air missile employment and tactics, suppression and destruction of enemy air defenses and lethal precision engagement.

### LINEAGE

85 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) constituted, 13 Jan 1942

Activated, 9 Feb 1942

Redesignated 85 Pursuit Squadron (Interceptor) (Twin-Engine), 31 Jan 1942

Redesignated 85 Fighter Squadron (Twin-Engine), 15 May 1942

Redesignated 85 Fighter Squadron, 10 Sep 1942

Redesignated 85 Fighter Squadron, Single-Engine, 21 Aug 1944

Inactivated, 15 Jul 1947

Redesignated 85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 11 Sep 1952

Activated, 1 Nov 1952

Inactivated, 1 Jul 1959

4485 Test Squadron designated and activated, 12 Apr 1971

85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron and 4485 Test Squadron consolidated and redesignated 85 Test and Evaluation Squadron, 15 Dec 1991

### **STATIONS**

Dale Mabry Field, FL, 9 Feb 1942  
Morris Field, NC, 1 May 1942  
East Boston Aprt, MA, 23 Jun 1942  
Bedford, MA, 1 Jul-28 Sep 1942  
Egypt, 12 Nov 1942  
Libya, 24 Jan 1943  
Tunisia, 13 Mar 1943  
Malta, 6 Jul 1943  
Sicily, 18 Jul 1943  
Southern Italy, 15 Sep 1943  
Salsola, Italy, 5 Oct 1943  
Madna Airfield, Italy, 19 Nov 1943  
Capodichino, Italy, 16 Jan 1944  
Pomigliano, Italy, 30 Apr 1944  
Corsica, 11 Jun 1944  
Southern France, 22 Aug 1944  
Iesi, Italy, 5 Oct 1944  
Fano, Italy, 5 Dec 1944  
Cesenatico, Italy, 24 Mar 1945  
Horsching, Austria, 26 Jul 1945-25 Jun 1947  
Langley Field, VA, 25 Jun-15 Jul 1947  
Scott AFB, IL, 1 Nov 1952-1 Jul 1959  
Eglin AFB, FL, 12 Apr 1971

### **ASSIGNMENTS**

79 Pursuit (later, 79 Fighter) Group, 9 Feb 1942-15 Jul 1947  
33 Air Division, 1 Nov 1952  
20 Air Division, 1 Mar 1956-1 Jul 1959  
USAF Tactical Air Warfare Center, 12 Apr 1971  
4443 (later, 79) Test and Evaluation Group, 1 Aug 1988  
53 Test and Evaluation Group, 20 Nov 1998

### **WEAPON SYSTEMS**

P-40, 1942-1944  
P-47, 1944-1947  
F-51, 1952-1953  
F-86, 1953  
F-86 Jun 1957  
F-4  
RF-4

F-15  
F-16  
A-10

## **COMMANDERS**

Lt Col Thomas B. Wright, Dec 1993-Jul 1995

## **HONORS**

### **Service Streamers**

### **Campaign Streamers**

World War II

Egypt-Libya

Tunisia

Sicily

Naples-Foggia

Anzio

Rhineland

Rome-Arno

Southern France

North Apennines

Po Valley

Air Combat, EAME Theater

### **Armed Forces Expeditionary Streamers**

### **Decorations**

Distinguished Unit Citations

North Africa and Sicily, Mar-17 Aug 1943

Italy, 16-20 Apr 1945

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

1 Jan 1984-31 May 1985

1 Jun 2002-31 May 2004

1 Jun 2004-31 May 2006

## **EMBLEM**



85 Fighter Squadron, 26 Aug 1942



85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron emblem: On a disc a futuristic aircraft red and white, passing through a light blue background into a dark blue background, in front of a snarling cat black, eye white, whiskers white, nose tipped white, tongue red. (Approved, 7 Aug 1953)





4485 Test Squadron emblem: On a disc divided per saltire, Light Blue, checky Black and White, Blue, checky Black and White a sword bendwise sinister point to base blade per Pale Blue and Light Blue, grip Red detailed Black guard and pommel Blue, surmounted by a Yellow lightning flash bendwise fimbriated Black, in chief a Yellow polestar shaded Blue radiant of six and in base an arc of Red arch embattled and crenelled Yellow all within a narrow Black border. (Approved, 8 Aug 1984 and slightly modified, 26 May 1987)

#### **MOTTO**

Wildcats  
Skulls

#### **OPERATIONS**

Combat in MTO, 14 Mar 1943-7 May 1945. Air defense in the US, 1952-1959.

Conducted operational test and evaluation, tactics development, and programs for a variety of aircraft, 1971-.

Nov 1952 The 113th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron inactivated, and its mission of protecting the Scott AFB-St Louis area was assumed by the newly activated 85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron—flying F86 Sabrejets. The 85 moved into newly completed readiness and alert hangars on the east side Scott's flight line—today's aero club area.

1 Jul 1959 The 85 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron inactivated. Their local air defense mission was assumed by the U.S. Army's 1st Missile Battalion commanding four Nike Ajax, Nike Hercules missile batteries that ringed the St Louis area. The Missile Battalion's command post was

collocated at Belleville Air Station, (locally known as Turkey Hill) and was supported by the 798th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, [later the 798th Radar Squadron (SAGE)].

They came quickly. Our first mission, escorting 11 B-25's which bombed German gun positions in the Mareth Line, was carried out smoothly by 12 P-40's each from 85 and 87th Squadrons on March 14, without enemy interference. Warming quickly to their work, the Hawks ran a string of 32 similar missions, totalling 590 sorties, in the next ten days, escorting American flown B-25's, British and South African flown Bostons and Baltimores with great success against the Mareth Line. No bombers had been lost to enemy fighters but we had been saddened by the loss of Lt. Melvin K. Davis of the 85, missing on March 21. Lt. Bolack of the 85 had been shot down by enemy Ack-Ack on March 21, but belly-landed behind our lines and returned safely. We had our first brushes with enemy fighters and Lt. Adair of the 87th and Lt. Maxwell of the 86th each shot down an ME. 109 on March 22d and 23rd respectively. Lt's. Liggett and McArthur of 87 shared an ME. 109 probable; Lt. Simpson and Capt. Cimaglia of the 85 each contributed 1 damaged. It was a good start, and evidenced the superior pre-battle training given the Group.

By March 25, General Montgomery had his famed New Zealanders poised to make their historic sweep around the Mareth Line to flank the Germans. The 79th was called on to support his feint to the north that day and was ordered out on that most hazardous mission of all for our fighter pilots—strafing enemy ground troops from an altitude of but a few feet. They did great damage to the enemy but lost Lt. F.T.Johnson, of the 85, who was missing. Lt. Johnson was later reported by the Germans, as safe, a prisoner of war. Meanwhile the gallant New Zealanders had made a good start in their dash for Gabes to cut off Rommel's escape, but had been stalled by an immense concentration of German 88 millimeter guns on heights South of El Hamma. These guns had to be knocked out or silenced for at least 2 ½ hours to allow "N Zeds"

The 79th Hawks roared up and down the road, showering the "88" gun positions with 50-caliber bullets in spite of deadly hail of small arms fire thrown up at them. Some pilots made the suicidal run again and again. Flesh and blood could not stand such an attack. The 88's were silenced during that critical 2½ hours, the New Zealanders broke through and forced the Germans to retire in disorder from the Mareth Line and beyond the Gabes Gap; the battle was a brilliant success. The objective justified serious losses but the hearts of the Hawks were heavy when Lt's David H. Brown, Arthur J. Weldon, Robert Spurgin of the 86th, and Robert E. Liggett of the 87th Sqdn., did not return that day. Major Delaney, commanding officer of the 316 Sqdn., v/as wounded in the leg but belly-landed at a friendly airdrome. Word was received, through the Catholic church, that Lt's Brown and Weldon were prisoners of war in Germany. Lt. John Hoagland of the 85 Sqdn., his motor shot out by ground fire, belly-landed safely in no man's land, was picked up by New Zealanders and sent safely back to his Squadron thus becoming a member of the "Late Arrivals Club". Capt. Borsodi, likewise hit by flak, bailed out of his disabled plane, floated to earth through a terrific artillery barrage and was also returned safely by the New Zealanders. The Group put on other and more spectacular shows, but El Ham-ma wil always remain its outstanding contribution to the North African Campaign. This is evidenced by the following commendation received from General Montgomery, dated March



27, 1943:

Seventeen more bomber escort missions followed in the next two days, a total of 240 sorties directed at further softening the enemy's Akarit positions and maintaining our control of the air. On April 8, the 8th Army struck again, a quick thrust around the left flank similar to that at El Hamma with the Indian Division spearheading. A synchronised attack by the American 2nd Corps was launched on Gafsa with the objective of making contact with the 8th Army and helping the latter flank the Afrika Corps out of the Wadi Akarit position. The 79th was to support by strafing the enemy's transport and artillery in the rear. The task was assigned to the 85, 87th and 316th Squadrons with the 86th flying top cover. The Hawks pressed the attack home with the same fury as at El Hamma choking the roads in the enemy's rear with flaming trucks and armored cars and annihilating many gun crews. The 79th had again done its work well but the 85 Squadron lost Lt. Ralph L. Lind, whose plane exploded in midair, and Lt. Thomas S. Anderson who got back to our lines, severely wounded.

The next day, April 21, 85 Squadron was on a fighter-bomber mission against enemy shipping off Cape Bon with 87th Squadron flying top cover, when jumped by 18 ME 109's. In the ensuing dogfight Lts. Berinati and Fitzgerald of the 87th "Skeeters" and Lt. Kelly of the 86th each shot down an ME 109, and Lt. Bolack, of the 85, damaged another. Lt. John R. Anderson, of the 85, was lost in this fight, having bailed out over the Gulf of Tunis, and has not been heard from since. On the 22nd, the 79th Group suffered its first non-combat fatality; Flight Officer Janicke, of the 87th, was killed when his plane plunged into a nearby lake during gunnery practice. On April 25, the 79th was relieved on patrol by the 57th Fighter Group, just 10 minutes before the latter encountered the huge convoy of approximately 100 Junkers 52's, escorted by 30 or 40 ME 109's, and shot down 75 of them for a new record for the war. It was a heart-breaking disappointment for the Hawks. Then on the following day, by a similar narrow margin, they missed the slaughter of the 31 huge ME 323's and 9 ME 109's, by the 7th South African Wing. However, their luck changed on April 29th when 86th Sqdn. Was jumped by 15 plus MC 202's and ME 109's, and shot down 3 Macchi's and 2 ME 109's, besides 1 Macchi and 1 ME 109 probably destroyed. Major Watkins, Commanding Officer of the "Commanche", Lts. Hanson, Kaufman, Conly, and Capt. Turner all got 1 destroyed each, and Lts. Conly and Brewer each contributed 1 probable. It was a field day for the 86th as they suffered no losses.

On 30 April, 85, 86, 87 and 316th Squadrons all went out and dive bombed a destroyer carrying troops out of Tunis Harbor, the 86th and 87th each getting direct hits with 500 lb. bombs, which seriously damaged the destroyer—credit for which was later shared with another Group. While reforming after their bombing runs, the 86th was jumped by 15 plus ME-109's, and in the dogfight that followed, Capt. Turner and Lt. Rhynard each shot down an "Me". Lt. Allard probably destroyed one and Lts. Rhynard, Hutt and Minnett each damaged another. In the dog fight, two Comanches collided while chasing the same ME 109 and the debris fell on a third below them, the triple collision causing the tragic loss of Lts. Perry E. Bailey, Thomas H. McCarty, and William D. Hansen of the 86th. 2 parachutes were seen to open and Lt. Bailey was later reported, from home, to have been picked up, uninjured, by an American freighter and taken to a place of safety. Nothing has been heard from McCarty and Hansen.

On the following mission, by all four squadrons the same day, another Italian Destroyer was sunk by the 87th and 316th Squadrons with 3 direct hits, and when the 85 Squadron covering them fought off an attack by 10 ME 109's, Capt. Say shot down an ME 109 and Lt. McNall, a MC 202, without loss to any of the squadrons.

On May 5th, Lt. Ryburn shot down another ME 109. Lt. Cahill was shot down by AA over Tunis on May 6 while on another fighterbomber mission, belly landed, and was seen to emerge from his plane, so it was hoped he became a P.O.W. On the following mission, the same day, 87 Squadron bombed a destroyer full of men, in the Gulf of Tunis, which blew up from direct hits and sank. Then on May 8, while still patrolling the "strangle hold" route around Cape Bon, the 86th, 87th and 316th Squadrons bombing formation with 85 as top cover, was jumped by 30 plus ME 109's and FW 190's. In this dogfight Capt. Dempsey, of the 316th Sqdn., Capt. Say, Lt. Hoagland, and Lt. Hale of the 85 Sqdn., each shot down a Messerschmitt, besides which, Lt. Hale shot down a Fiesler Storch, all without loss to any of our pilots. This was the last challenge by the Luftwaffe in the Tunisian Campaign for we had the air to ourselves while we swept his evacuation shipping from the sea, up to the end of hostilities on May 12. From the 13th through the 23rd the 79th then ran a series of 63 missions escorting friendly destroyers which were patrolling the waters around the Cape for stragglers, and also covering the first convoys coming through the Sicilian narrows, all without incident.

The Pantelleria campaign was short but furious. Beginning on June 4, a series of 59 umbrella and bomber escort missions were run over the island during which the Hawks had a field day at the expense of the luckless Italian and German fighters, who attempted to break their "umbrella". On June 7, the 85 was jumped by 8 enemy fighters and Lt's Clark and Bunker each shot down a Macchi 202. The following day, the same squadron was jumped by 10 plus ME 109's over Pantelleria, and this time Lt. Bolack and Lt. Martin each shot down a Macchi 202 and Capt. Cimaglia shot down a Macchi and an ME 109. Lt's Clark and Ryburn also shot down a Messerschmitt each, Lt. Hoagland got an ME 109 probable, and Lt. Abbott damaged another. Major Watkins, of 86th Sqdn., damaged an additional MC 202, making a Group total of 6 destroyed and 1 damaged and 1 probable for the day, without loss.

The 86th had been leading the other 2 squadrons all through the Tunisian campaign with a score of 13 enemy planes destroyed. The 85, however, jumped into the lead on June 8, their day's bag running their score to 16 destroyed. On June 9, the 86th drew up close when Major Watkins shot down another ME 109, while Capt. Morrisey and Lt's Bedford and Borsodi shared an FW 190 destroyed over Pantelleria, without loss, bringing their total up to 15. The 87th, which had had poor hunting, trailed with a score of 7. The came memorable June 10, when the 87th "Skeeters" electrified the Group and the entire Air Force by shooting down 15 enemy aircraft in 15 furious minutes over Pantelleria without a single loss to themselves, jumping into the lead of 22 destroyed.

It was the sort of dogfight fighter pilots dream of. After shooting down 3 Macchi 202's,



stragglers from another dog fight in progress, the "Skeeters" shot down an entire squadron of 12 ME 109's escorting an enemy sea-rescue plane, refraining from attack on the latter. Lt. McArthur covered himself with distinction in shooting down 2 ME 109's, 2 Macchi 202's and damaging another ME 109, before bailing out of his damaged plane which had been crippled in the first onslaught. Lt. McArthur was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for the outstanding achievement. Lt. Anderson's performance was scarcely less distinguished. After shooting down 2 Macchi 202's and 1 ME 109 he returned and assisted Capt. Cossick and Lt. Jory to maintain the circling vigil that resulted in McArthur's rescue from the sea, after dark, by Walrus. There was plenty of glory for all that day. Capt. Ruff and Lt's Kirsch, Watkins, Miller, Adair and Berinati each shot down an ME. Lt. Col. Crogan, Group Operations Officer, contributed the weirdest victory of all by pressing so close, to make sure of his kill, that he sheered off the wing of an ME 109 which was violently evading. The Messerschmitt crashed into the sea, while the Colonel's rugged P-40 safely made port only damaged "Cat. I". Colonel Crogan, however, did not recommend these buzz saw tactics to other pilots. On the same day, the 85 added another to its bag when Lt. Connolly shot down a Macchi 202. That was the last notable operation of the 79th in the North African Campaign. The Hawks continued their series of bomber escort missions without incident, until Pantelleria, after a terrific week's air blitz, surrendered on June 15th. That ended the North African Campaign for the Hawks, who had run a total of 668 sorties in the Pantelleria Operation which netted a bag of 26 destroyed, 1 probable and 4 damaged for the Group, without any losses.

Our Group Commander, Colonel Earl E. Bates, who had been promoted to full Colonel during the campaign, was awarded the British D.F. on July 13, for the outstanding work of the Group under his leadership. D.F.C's were also awarded to the Squadron Commanders, Major Jacob F. Schoellkopf of the 85, Major Tarlton N. Watkins of the 86th and Major Benjamin F. Ulrich of the 87th Squadrons, for the inspiring leadership given their pilots. Major Watkins was ordered home for a rest after serving overseas almost constantly since Pearl Harbor. He was succeeded as Commanding Officer of the 86th Squadron by Capt. Fred A. Borsodi.

Toward the end, as targets diminished, the pilots had time to seek a few of the comforts available in Sicily. The 85 Squadron showed the way by making arrangements with a local doctor to use his unoccupied home for a club. Quickly the house was screened, fitted with electric lights and a comfortable side room equipped with an ME 109 wing and brass rail — a regular "Union Club". Further up the hill, toward Mineo, overlooking the L. G., appeared the "Skeeter" Club sign hung in a stone gateway marking the entrance to a Baron's Villa. Here the 87th Squadron and their guests enjoyed some of the amenities including the novelty of plumbing.

On the 7th of November, weather permitted 85 Sq to invade the roads Northwest of the Sangro. In about 18 minutes of combat they destroyed a barn, a staff car, machine gun post, 3 trucks and damaged 14 more trucks, 2 trailers, 4 machine gun posts, a house and a German jeep—a neat pattern of work for an autumn afternoon.

On November 16, a few of us flew to Bari with Major Benson, General Montgomery's pilot, in the General's C-47. Some weeks before, the General had invited nearly a dozen officers from

Group and 85, 86, 87 Squadrons to accompany him to Cairo. At the airdrome, the General made a really typical statement: "Gentlemen, you are free for forty-eight hours, unless of course, the 8th is in full retreat before then".

Averaging 36 to 48 sorties a day, the 79th continued to work close support targets on the lateral roads branching out of Chieti. After dropping bombs, the aircraft, usually in squadron flights of six, separated and strafed individually. Intense small arms fire supplemented the danger of heavy and light anti-aircraft fire. On the second day of December, Lt. DeFoor's aircraft struck high tension wires, cutting the entire electrical system north of Pescara. By good fortune, he escaped injury although the aircraft returned with a damaged vertical stabilizer, prop, and wing. In the desert, the carrying away of communications wire was a good show because the supporting poles were made of light wood. These European high tension cables erected on steel frames were another story. On the same day Lt. Kellerman, 85 Sq., struck by flak, failed to return.

The directive for Dec 18th, 1943, from the DAF, called for a strong effort in support of the New Zealand and Indian Divisions thrusting towards Orsogna and Tollo. Thirty missions were flown by Warhawks of 57th and 79th Groups, the RAF 239 Wing and the SAAF Spit-bombers of No. 4 Squadron against enemy gun positions and installations in these areas. In spite of indifferent weather, these attacks were pressed home wherever it was possible to identify targets. Until noon, fourteen missions had bombed well on their targets. Only three missions had failed to locate them. Afternoon, the cloud became 10/10ths solid at 4,000 feet and even lower. Nine missions brought their bombs back while four bombed alternative targets, discovered through some gap in the clouds. In some instances, the overcast extended down to 1,000 feet above sea level and in some places near Orsogna, the "deck" itself is 1,000 feet above sea level. Thus you can realize that the overcast extended almost to the ground, which accentuates the courage, bravery and determination of every fighterbomber pilot who on the 18th day of December, carried out his attack through such low cloud-layers upon positions known to be well defended by flak. This determination to fulfill a mission caused serious losses for the day. 87th Sqn. Lost two pilots, Lts. Simmons and Specht, 85 Sqn. lost one, Lt. Marshall and the British lost two others. Lt. Specht led his flight through the overcast and was not seen to pull out from his dive. On the same mission, after pulling out at tree top level, Lt. Simmons went on to strafe some MT and, although hit on his first pass, was beginning another when his aircraft "went in", in the Orsogna-Arielli area. This was conspicuous gallantry and outstanding bravery.

Tanks are as vulnerable to snow as MT. The last target on the 9th was a fighter bomber show by twelve aircraft of 85 and 87 squadrons on snow bound tanks near Pescocostanzo. One of our pilots, Lt. Varner, 85 Squadron, was missing after this operation. The missions for the tenth were accepted and given out the evening of the ninth. 86 Squadron was to takeoff at dawn, five minutes after seven. 87 followed ten minutes later. Each flight leader himself judged the weather favorable or unfavorable. Both squadrons elected to fly and they repeated the targets of the 9th, tanks and MT on the mountain roads. Lt. Wiener of the 87th Squadron failed to return. It is the custom for squadrons to send out "recces" for missing pilots. Captain Lee, Commanding Officer of 87 and Lt. Van-divert went out immediately even though Captain Lee

had been on the same mission. They found no sign of Lt. Wiener.

79 Group operated from Capodichino on the 18th, sending out 48 sorties to escort surface vessels shelling enemy strongholds from the Gulf of Gaeta, north of Naples. On the 19th and 20th, thirty-six sorties were flown by 85, 86th and 87th Squadrons from Madnd. This operation, while aircraft Worked from Capodichino on the 20th, using different squadron call signs, served as a decoy to the German interceptor control stations, picking up our flights. We wanted the Hun to believe we were still operating from Madna.

January 25 found 87 continuing its successful combat operations whil patrolling the convoy lane. Called in to fight over the assault beaches, six P-40's fought ten plus enemy a/ One FW 190 was destroyed and one ME 109 damaged by Lt. Beck. Lt. Anderson, attacking an ME 109, also scored a "damaged". The 85 Sqn., on a later mission with 15 a/c, intercepted 15 plus ME's and FW's diving through a break in the overcast to bomb Anzio point. Lt. Callum, the Squadron Operations Officer, known to us as "Killer" destroyed a FW 190 while Lt. Duffield destroyed an ME 109. Lts. Proctor and Mathesius each claimed an ME 109 damaged.

Aircraft from 85 Sqn. flew on the same mission, engaging twelve plus enemy aircraft, ME's and 190's. Lts. Stewart and Callum each probably destroyed one and Lt. Benz another.

On certain occasions our patrols spotted enemy a/c but the Huns refused engagements, preferring to streak for their home bases North of Rome. 99 Sqn., already known for their work on "D " day, attacked ten FW's on the 5th with seven of their P-40's. One FW was destroyed in the encounter, but one of their pilots was missing. 87 and 85 Sqns. on the same day knocked out RR guns which had been shelling the beachhead with serious results.

Two days later 99 Sqn. again contacted the enemy, destroying 3 FW's with no loss to themselves. About an hour later 85 Sqn., with eight a/c, attacked over 20 FW's which had hoped to bomb harbor installations at Anzio. Six or eight ME 109's flew invitingly and lazily about hoping to divert 85 Sqn. from the FW's.

The ruse helped only to destroy 4 FW 190's, 2 ME 109's and damaged 2 FW 190's. 85, not satisfied with the stimulation of a dogfight, knocked out MT and guns by strafing the Appian way while en route to base.

In their afternoon show, 85 destroyed 2 more FW's. 87 also figured in the day's shooting when one of eight FW's diving past their patrol formation was destroyed. On the 5th of Feb., 79 Group destroyed 12 enemy a/c and damaged 2. (No wonder we didn't go to China.)

The Globe's Greatest  
History of the 85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron  
by David McLaren, 2006

The 85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron was activated at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, on November 1, 1952. They replaced, in designation, the 113th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, Indiana Air National Guard, which had been called to federal service on February 1, 1951 at Stout Field, Indianapolis. At the time of activation the 85 FIS absorbed all of the assets and the majority of personnel from the 113th FIS, and the 113th FIS designation was returned to Indiana Without Personnel & Equipment for reconstitution, now at Terre Haute. The 85 FIS was assigned to the 33rd Air Division at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, with further assignment to the Central Air Defense Force, CADF, at Grandview AFB, Missouri.

The squadron commander of the 'new' 85 FIS was Lt. Colonel Joseph Klemovich, who replaced Lt. Colonel Charles Peterson, who took eligible members of the 113th FIS back to Indiana with him. Klemovich now was accompanied by 60 officers and 242 airmen, the majority of which by now were USAF personnel with only a few air guardsmen left over.

Just prior to the 85 FIS's activation the 113th FIS had converted from F-51H to F-51D Mustangs. They also gained a pair of T-6 Texan trainers, one D model, and one G model, for instrument work. (During this brief changeover period the 113th FIS suffered a fatal F-51D loss over Belleville, IL which is often erroneously associated as being an 85 FIS Mustang).

Three days after the 85 FIS's activation, on November 4, Lt. Joseph Holden and another pilot were scrambled by "Agony," the 798th AC&W Squadron at Turkey Hill Air Force Station, IL and the squadron's primary radar site, after a UFO. It quickly outran the Mustangs and no visual contact was made.

During the first part of 1953 the 85 FIS sent five pilots to jet-transition schools, and had ten more slated for assignments to F-86D conversion training. On March 10 L-20A 52-6083 arrived, which replaced the squadron's two T-6s for general hack service. Sometime during this period they also gained a pair of F-80Cs. The T-6s would finally depart in the fall.

On April 14 Captain Emil Froelich was landing on Runway 12 in his Mustang (44-74855) when his left landing gear strut broke: material failure. Froelich was uninjured.

In June the 85 FIS returned from Yuma AFB, Arizona after seven weeks of gunnery training. In July the 797th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, "Mastiff," at Fordland, Missouri was running a practice interception mission between two 85 FIS Mustangs when one of them began losing all of its oil. Radar vectors were provided to Naval Air Station, Vichy, Missouri where its (unidentified) pilot broke out of an overcast just in time to effect a safe dead-stick landing. Also, on July 6 the 85 FIS participated in a 'live' air defense scramble, which turned out to be a 8-29. Another 'live' scramble occurred on July 13, this time the target turned out to be a civilian Cessna that was off course.

On August 7 their new squadron insignia as "The Globe's Greatest" was approved. It replaced the original "Flying Skulls" insignia that had stemmed from WWI. The new insignia had been designed by the art department at Washington University, St. Louis.

(The same art department students designed and painted abstract designs upon the pilots P-1 helmets). During August the squadron was challenged by an Operational Readiness Inspection which pitted them against 8 B-29s conducting a mock attack against St. Louis.

They were the only ADC squadron to defend their area with 100% effectiveness. A St. Louis Post Dispatch newspaper article describing the event was titled "The Globe's Greatest," and the name stuck. On August 17, 1953 Major Carl Habeck, 85 FIS operations officer, flew in the first F-86D (51-6235).

Exercises in September included six with Sabres, four with Mustangs, and one with one of the squadron's two F-80Cs. All of which involved twenty sorties, of which fifteen were considered successful.

In September the squadron's strength was boosted by arrivals from USAF Pilot Training Class 53-C, which were all jet qualified. They served as replacements for the last of the ANG people that were soon released from federal service. The new pilots were not permitted to fly the Mustangs!

The 85 FIS suffered its first fatal F-86D loss on October 22 when Major Yancy Williams crashed after takeoff from Runway 14 (51-3029). Williams attempted to turn to the northwest, overshot the approach to Runway 36, and then attempted a landing in a cornfield west of the base. He almost made it, but the Sabre struck an electric transformer pole and exploded. The accident investigation showed that the Sabre had a hydraulic elevator control lock due to a misconnecting of hydraulic lines. Williams had been the squadrons Material Officer.

On November 3 two Mustangs were scrambled on a 'live' mission, which turned out to be a B-25. This was followed by another scramble against another B-25. On December 18 an active scramble took place, apparently the first for the squadron's F-86Ds, and this time the target turned out to be a balloon!

The 33rd Air Division stated that Lambert Field, St. Louis, MO would be the "emergency fighter base" for the 85 FIS in early 1954. There is no evidence that it was ever utilized as such.

The only actual air defense scramble during the first half of 1954 occurred on January 13 when two Mustangs were scrambled against a B-50 flying at 29,000 feet. And it appears that this was the last one for the squadron's Mustangs.

The F-80Cs were transferred to the 33rd Air Division right after the first of the new year, and one was lost in Michigan on February 25 after its 33rd AD pilot became lost.

On February 4, 1954 one of the squadron's F-51Ds was lost near Wentzville, Missouri during a two-ship formation flight. Just after a cross-over maneuver at 15,000 feet 1st Lt. Neil Hadley spotted a Sabre and climbed after it, but he lost control and spun-in. He was fatally injured (45-

11561). Soon thereafter all of the squadron's Mustangs were placed in storage while awaiting transfer to the ANG.

On March 3, 1954 the 85 FIS went TDY to Grandview AFB while the base runways and the squadron's parking area at Scott AFB were resurfaced. The flightline area was only eighteen months old, but it was already in disrepair due to jet blast and fuel spills. While at Grandview they assisted the 326th FIS in becoming operational in with their F-86Ds.

The 85 FIS lost an F-86D (51-6236) on March 15 at Grandview AFB when it burned on the ramp. 1st Lt. Richard Gruber had completed an engineering test flight, landed, and was demonstrating a fluctuating RPM drop to the aircraft's crew chief and the line chief when the aircraft exploded. It was abandoned without injuries. The 85 FIS officially became operational with the F-86D in March, and the F-51s began being transferred, with the last one leaving in May.

After Lt. Gruber was promoted to captain he became the squadron's maintenance officer and flew with the radio callsign of "Dropkick Five." His flight demonstrations with the F-86D during Scott AFB Open Houses, were impressive, particularly during his "Merry Widow" passes with the Sabre in a high angle of attack on the edge of the power curve. They sure looked neat from the control tower.

On April 28 the 85 FIS lost its first Lockheed T-33A (51-6908) while on a cross-country flight to Offutt AFB, Nebraska. Its pilot undershot his landing approach by forty feet and crashed against an embankment. Both 2nd Lts Frederick "Bud" Brown and Robert Lynch suffered back injuries.

(Now) Lt. Colonel Carl Habeck replaced Lt. Colonel Klemovich as squadron commander on May 5. Klemovich was transferred to the Japanese Air Self Defense Force.

June 1954 was a tough month for the squadron. On June 10 1st Lt. Ellis Meaker had a hard landing at Scott AFB, in his Sabre (51-3026) which resulted in major damage to its wing, fuselage and landing gear. Two weeks later, on June 24, another T-33A was lost (52-9636) as 2nd Lt. Ron Long attempted a JATO takeoff on Runway 18. The aircraft stalled, cartwheeled and burned right in front of the flightline. Long suffered second degree burns, while its enlisted man passenger, A/2C Larry Stevens, had third degree burns. On June 29 another F-86D (51-6226) landed wheels-up in a farmer's field after a flameout in the traffic pattern at Scott AFB. 1st Lt. Stuart Kane was uninjured, and the damage was considered to be only 'moderate.'

During the later half of the year the squadron's F-86Ds were replaced under Project Pullout. This entailed the transfer on a one-to-one basis of a Sabre to McClellan AFB in exchange for one that had been modified to include a drag parachute in its aft section (Plus some six hundred other improvements). By the end of the year twenty had been exchanged, and the project was completed on April 20, 1955. This exchange also brought on a change to the squadron's Sabre's markings, by Headquarters ADC decree, with the squadron insignia being moved to the vertical stabilizer in place of the old identifying letter, and the removal of the lightning bolt from the fuselage sides, replacing them with U. S. Air Force.

Then came project Hot Wheel, which involved returning these Sabres to McClellan AFB for an engine with improved turbine wheels. [The older F-86Ds had a propensity to have their turbine wheel explode. "Don't give me a F-86D, she's fast, I don't care, she blows up in midair."]

During March, April and May a detachment of 85 FIS went TOY to Duluth AFB, Minnesota to cover for the 11th FIS while they were TDY to Yuma AFB for gunnery training. The 85 FIS received a letter of commendation for their efforts. On an unspecified date during this period the 85 FIS received the Air Defense Command's "A' Award" for excellence.

It was back to Grandview AFB on April 27 while additional runway resurfacing took place at Scott AFB. They returned on May 31.

On June 30 Lt. Colonel Habeck was transferred to Germany and Lt. Colonel Douglas Peck became the new squadron commander. Befitting, his radio callsign was "Dropkick One."

Major David Campbell, squadron operations officer, "Dropkick Three" became the first pilot in the CADF to attain the 'Skilled' rating in the F-86D. He shot off the target sleeve on four consecutive sorties, to the dismay of his wingman who then did not have a target to fire upon. In a historical oddity, Campbell had been initially assigned to the 85 Fighter Squadron in 1942 as a Flying Sergeant.

Lt. Ronald Ferguson was killed in a F-86D on October 1, 1955. The Sabre (52- 3810) had flamed out in the traffic pattern after shooting a touch-and-go, and Ferguson was again attempting to land on Runway 18. When he saw that he was not going to make it, he ejected, but he was 'out of the envelope' and he struck the ground just ahead of the sliding wreckage.

On March 1, 1956 control of the 85 FIS was transferred to the 20th Air Division at Grandview AFB. As when assigned to the 33rd AD, they still would report directly to their Air Division, without having either a parent group or wing assignment as did most of ADC's interceptor squadrons.

Commencing in May 1956 came Project Follow On, a conversion of F-86Ds to the new F-86L with a slightly longer wing and SAGE equipment.

On August 3 Lt. Tony Skur was on a cross-country flight when he became lost and ran out of fuel in his Sabre (52-3868). Skur attempted to land on a rural road near Turner AFB, Georgia, but wound up in a ditch. The Sabre was destroyed and Skur was injured.

On September 10 Lt.'s Ted Stoick and Dennis Kidd were killed in T-33A 52-9765 as they attempted to takeoff from Runway 13 at Scott AFB. Halfway down the runway they realized that they had a fire in the engine's plenum chamber, but it was too late to abort the takeoff and the T-Bird exploded before they could get high enough to eject. (During the summer of 1956



Runway 14/32 was re-compassed and became Runway 13/31).

On October 9 1st Lt. Roger Pile was serving as an early morning target for another flight of F-86Ds when his engine began losing oil pressure. On the way back to Scott AFB it then had a double generator failure. Pile attempted a flameout approach to Runway 31 but its engine seized and he had to eject over Mascoutah, Illinois. Pile was commended for his courage in sticking with the Sabre long enough to ensure that it would not strike two schools in Mascoutah. (52-3867)

During the squadron's deployment to Vincent AFB, AZ (nee Yuma AFB) in the summer of 1957 Captain Oscar Fladmark was killed in an automobile accident. He may have been the squadron's only non-aircraft accident/illness loss.

On an undetermined date during this period Lt. Buckhotz landed as the number two man in his flight on Runway 18, only he had forgotten to lower his landing gear. Buckhotz salvaged the situation by turning it into a touch-and-go, went around and landed okay. The only damage was to the bottom of his droptanks. (And his pride). It was regarded as an incident, and not an accident.

During the evening of November 19, 1957 two F-86Ls were lost when they collided near Sparta, Illinois. 1st Lt.'s James Metz and William McDaniel were conducting a practice interception exercise, working with "Parka," the 725th AC&W Squadron at Walnut Ridge, Arkansas, as "Agony's" "weapon was broke." Lt. McDaniel was flying as "Dropkick White One" and Lt. Metz as wingman, "Dropkick White Three." The radar failed on McDaniel's Sabre as he was making a final interception and he told Metz they were about to collide and to eject and attempted to do so himself. The Sabres collided before McDaniel could eject, but he was blown clear of the wreckage, suffering major injuries. 53-576 (Metz) and 53-954 (McDaniel).

On July 21, 1958 1st Lt. Charles "Bud" Rogers had to eject from his F-86L (52-10134) after it caught on fire during an engineering test flight near Walsh, Illinois. He was uninjured.

On April 4, 1959 1st Lt. Robert Gregory attempted to takeoff Runway 13 enroute to Grandview AFB, but his engine lost power and Gregory attempted to abort the takeoff. He tried to jettison his droptanks, but only the right one came off, and the T-33A slewed off the runway collapsing its left landing gear. He was uninjured. (56-1698).

The 85 FIS lost its last F-86L on April 9, 1959 as 2nd Lt. Charles Rasnic was participating in his first practice scramble with the squadron after graduating from Perrin AFB, Texas just two months previously. The fuel system in his Sabre (52-4298) failed and no amount of corrective efforts would help, and when the engine quit over southern Illinois, Rasnic ejected three miles southeast of Houston, Illinois without injury. [Just some five miles from where Rogers' had to eject.]

The 85 FIS was inactivated on July 1, 1959. It's last squadron commander was Lt. Colonel James

Covington. The majority of their F-86Ls were transferred either to the Nebraska or Texas Air National Guard, their hanger was taken over by the 11th Aeromedical Squadron, and their alert barns went to the base aero club. Today the aero club still occupies a part of the alert barns, while snowplows are stored in the other part. The 458th AS occupies the old main hanger with C-21s.

The 113th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, an Indiana Air National Guard unit, was activated at Scott during the Korean War on 1 February 1951. This was the unit of assignment until the 85 was reactivated as the 85 FIS, 1 November 1952 and concurrently re-designated as the 85 Fighter Interceptor Squadron.

Many of the ADC fighter squadrons were initially formed from ANG units that had been activated at the beginning of the Korean War. The guard units were returned to the guard (state control) when the air force units were formed. There were still quite a few of the ANG pilots in the 85 when I first arrived at Scott. Most were gone by early 1954. The 85 only had F-51's, T-6's and T-33's until late July or early August 1953. There were only about three other pilots checked out in F-86D's when the five of us from Pilot Training Class 53-C arrived in Sep 53. The F-51's continued to pull alert until about May of 1954. I think that my class was the first group of pilots to arrive that didn't get to check out in the F-51. The F-51 guys were gradually sent to Perrin or Tyndall for the 10 ride D checkout.

I was assigned to the 113th Fighter Interceptor Squadron upon completion of a wonderful, scenic tour in Korea. I arrived at Scott AFB around the 1st of September in 1952. The 113th was a National Guard Squadron from Indianapolis, Indiana and was equipped with F-51D/H and a few T-6s. The squadron was housed over base operations and maintenance was performed in the large hangar behind base operations. I think that at that time, Maj. Owen Farmer, Lt. Dick Gruber and myself, were the only Air Force types assigned. I was checked out in the T-6 on 6 September and the F-51D on 8 September. Never did get to fly the H model.

Gradually we got more Air Force types. Among them was Lt/Col. Joseph Klemovitch, and Capt. Oscar Fladmark(Oscar was killed in an automobile accident at Yuma, Arizona in 1957). On the 1st of November, 1952 the 113th designation was returned to Indiana and the 85 FIS was activated with Col. Klemovitch as commander. Most of the guard personnel and their aircraft remained with the 85.

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My only near experience with UFOs came at Scott AFB on November 4, 1952. Two of us (I don't recall the other pilot) were on night alert, watching election returns on TV to find out who the next president would be. Around 7PM we were scrambled. We all know the feeling...a shot of adrenaline and away we go. After becoming airborne, we contacted GCI and were informed that our target was a flying saucer. The controller claimed to have had visual on the target and in addition to being saucer shaped, he claimed that it had windows. I asked if he had seen anyone peering out of the windows. My question was studiously ignored. We were vectored in a northerly direction and directed to climb to around six thousand feet. Our target was twelve o'clock at twenty miles. When we leveled off, we maintained climb power. We were informed that our target was now twelve o'clock at thirty miles. A couple of minutes later, our bogie was at forty and another couple of minutes at fifty miles. I suggested that our target was a bit faster than we and I didn't think we could catch it. I was really disappointed. It would have been nifty to catch a UFO. I probably would have become rich and famous. In any event, we returned to base and found that "Ike" was our new president but we also proved that in general, UFOs are faster than F-51s.

About the middle of November, a large group of pilots just graduated from pilot training arrived. None of them had tail-dragger experience. The rest of November and most of December was spent preparing them to check out in the F-51. This was done by having them become proficient in landing the T-6 from the rear cockpit. Some during this period several of us went to Burbank to pick up newly IRAN'ed F-51s from Pacific Aeromotive. The aircraft were not ready when we arrived and I recall myself and another pilot somehow ending up staying at a beach cottage in Hermosa Beach with a group of stewardesses... 'nuf said. The birds we picked up were the best F-51s I ever flew. The aircraft were delivered with external fuel tanks which slowed cruise speed by about 40 MPH.

The first new pilot cleared to fly the F-51 was killed on his initial flight...Lt. Delmarcado?? If I recall correctly, it was thought that he had too much fuel in his fuselage tank and he pulled up too abruptly causing stick reversal and then airframe failure.

The second pilot to check out, Dick Rardin, ground looped on landing...an event witnessed by all the new pilots courtesy of Maj. Farmer. Neither the airplane or the pilot suffered any damage. One pilot couldn't check out and I think left the Air Force. I can't recall exactly when the 85 moved to its permanent home at the south end of the ramp, but it was around this time. We acquired several T-33s and I can't recall why, but also at least one L-20. In January of 1953, I got most of my time in T-33s in preparing to go to Tyndall AFB to check out in the F-86D.

In February, I departed for Moody AFB and Tyndall to check out in the F-86D. Moody's job was to brainwash you in to believing you could fly in any kind of weather. They did a good job of it. Their T-Birds looked as if they had been crafted by Lockheed with ball peen hammers, particularly the leading edge of the wings and air intakes. Three pilots from the 85 were the first to get the full 40 hour training course in the Dog. Capt. Herman Williams, and I think Maj. Yancy Williams and myself. After about 20 hours, our instructors were asking us what happened on

each mission...they hadn't been there yet! I do remember what a great piece of equipment the simulator was. I felt right at home in the "D" on my first flight.

In late May of 1954, the squadron deployed to Yuma for gunnery training in the F-51 and I found I couldn't hit squat. In late June, I was sent TDY to Norton AFB to ferry F-86Ds from the factory at LAX to squadrons all over the US. Had a great time. There were three exciting things I can recall from this mission. The first occurred on a mission to deliver and "86" to Moses Lake (Larson AFB?), Washington. I had encountered a line of thunderstorms on my way there and although I never went IFR, some really rough weather was encountered. When I landed the "Follow Me" vehicle picked me up and I followed him to the parking ramp. As I approached, I became aware that there was a really large group of people on the flight line, even a band. I wondered who the VIP was. I was directed to a parking spot right in front of the crowd. As I got closer, the eyes of the alert crewman grew larger and his mouth kind of gaped. After he chocked the airplane, he put the ladder up and asked me what happened. I had no idea what he was talking about. He invited me to get out and see, which I did. To my surprise, the radome was non-existent and the radar antenna looked as though it had been in a battle and lost. Apparently one of the thunderstorms I flew next to was ejecting hail stones out the top or side of the storm. I was informed that this was the first aircraft to be delivered to the base and the big turn out was to welcome it. I filled out the forms and slunk from the base. Was really glad to get out of there!

The second incident occurred when I picked up a "D" at Norton...a number of the earliest 86Ds were sent to Norton to be upgraded from -5, -10, and -15s to F-86D-20s. I took off without afterburner because the leg was to Kirtland which was a fairly long leg for the bird. We had been told that the engine could not flame out because of the way the fuel system worked. I checked the emergency system before take off and everything sorked fine. On climb out I was climbing at about the same rate as the terrain. I was about 2,000 feet above the ground and at about 8,000 feet when the engine went BLOOP and there was no doubt in my mind that I had a flame out. I made a fast 180 and called an emergency and immediately did an air start procedure. I made a start in the emergency fuel system mode and landed without further incident. When I reached the parking slot, I didn't shut down and requested a GE tech rep. In a short time a rep appeared and I told him what happened, he said it was impossible so I asked him to switch from the emergency system to the normal system, when he did the engine again went Bloop the RPM went to zero the tech rep turned red climbed down and left.

Some of the ferry missions took several days and required that I carry cloths for three or four days. There were only 2 places to store cloths on the "D". One was over the rocket pod and the other was under the cowling that covered the top of the radar system between the radome and the windshield. I was to deliver a bird to Suffolk County Airport on the eastern end of Long Island, New York. The cloths I had to take would not fit over the rocket pod so I stowed them under the front cowl. The leg from LAX to Kirtland was uneventful. I took off from Kirtland bound for Memphis NAS and somewhere over Oklahoma there was a loud boom and something flashed in front of the windshield. My first impression was that I had been involved in a mid-air and I was waiting for something dire to happen. After a few seconds, I realized that

there wasn't any immediate consequences for what had happened(I had apparently ducked into the cockpit with the first bang). I sat up straight and began inspecting the aircraft. The wings were OK. The controls responded normally and I was really mystified as to what had happened. I sat up real straight to look over the nose and discovered that all that was visible was a bunch of black boxes between the cockpit and the radome. I landed at Tinker AFB with no further incident. Amazingly, my cloths and shaving kit were still where I had put them on top of all the black boxes.

I was assigned to Scott AFB in August 1952 when I completed my tour in Korea. I'm fairly sure I was ferrying airplanes when the Major was killed (I think his name was Yancy Williams) but do recall that he made an extra effort to clear any possible ground casualties probably costing him his life. You are correct, fortunately the P-51 Lt. only killed himself, horrible thing for his wife to see however. We lived in base housing which was across the road from the base. They were like town houses with two stories, they had three bedrooms upstairs. I already had three kids, all boys but if I recall they were quite comfortable. Most of the new pilots were bachelors so we got a graphic picture of the dating game at that time. It wasn't to much different than now as most of them found a girl to shack up with. It was kind of a shock when we went to visit some of them and the girls were lounging around with less cloths than the Burlesque queens in St Louis.

It was the 113th Ftr Squadron and was an Air National Guard Squadron from Indiana. They were equipped with F-51s and I was one of only about four non-guard pilots assigned, that changed shortly when we received about twenty five pilots fresh out of flying school, interestingly they never had any tail wheel experience. We prepared them to fly the F-51 by teaching them to fly the T-6 from the back seat. One pilot couldn't hack it and lost his wings. The first pilot who went for a flight in the F-51 exceeded the design limits of the airplane and managed to pull the wings off buzzing his wife's house and the next one ground looped on landing. This got the attention of all the rest and we had no more problems. In December of 1952 a new squadron was formed.. the 85 Ftr Interceptor Squadron. In the spring of 1953 three of us went to Tyndall AFB and were actually the first three pilots in the Air Force to get the full forty hours of training. After about twenty hours our instructors were asking us questions. The Major who later crashed was one of the students. I was assigned duty delivering aircraft fresh out of the North American factory to various bases around the country, ultimately I spent six months doing this and delivered over forty aircraft. For a while the 85 Fighter Squadron was the largest in the Air Force with 22 Guard F-51s, 25 USAF F-51, 3 T-33, 5 T-6s, 1- L20 and 25 F-86Ds, this only lasted a few weeks as the Guard Planes returned to Indiana. I can't recall where our F-51s went since I was ferrying airplanes. I think the T- 6s went to the bone yard.

This is the narrative report of my F-86D aircraft accident which occurred on October 9th, 1956. I was in the hospital at Scott AFB recovering from a very sore neck sustained in the ejection. Lt Col Peck , the Squadron Commander, and Capt. Fox, the Operations Officer, asked me to write it while the details were still fresh in my mind. I did so the same day as the accident. I had only been in the squadron for about six months and had maybe 100 to 150 hours in the aircraft, receiving my wings less than a year earlier.

"I took off from Scott AFB at 0825 on a training mission as target ship. All instruments checked out as normal on the runup before take-off I contacted AGONY when airborne and they told me to climb out on a heading of 120 degrees to 40,000' . I reached 26,000' climbing at 100% military power and everything appeared normal. At this point the tachometer failed and rapidly wound down to zero. I checked all instruments and noticed the oil pressure guage also indicating zero. I contacted AGONY and advised them of my condition. They gave me my pigeons as 310 at 62 miles. I turned to this heading, and leaving the power at 100% and 685 degrees TPT, dropped the speed brakes and started to descend.

During this time I was contacted by Capt. Fox, the 85's Operations Officer, to set up a simulated flame-out pattern. I called the tower and requested they open the long runway for me and after a short delay they approved me to land on R/W 31. I had 3300# of fuel while inbound to the field and descended at about 250 kts-2500 fpm. I arrived over the base at 12,000 ft and elected to do a 360 degree turn and set up a high key for the simulated flame out pattern at about 7-8,000 ft as per the T/O. At this time I reduced the power to 450 degrees TPT figuring this would give me about 80%. I did this in order to kill off my airspeed so as to be able to drop the gear and also felt that this would be enough power to complete my approach since normal simulated patterns are done with 79%.

After 180 degrees of the intended 360 to the high key, I experienced what appeared at first to be complete electrical failure and smelled and noticed electrical smoke in the c/p. Both generators and inverters were out and the lock-up light was on.. The TPT however had dropped to approximately 250 degrees. I called the tower and advised them. Realizing that I was now committed to land from this high downwind of 9,000 ft., I rolled out on approximately 130 degrees and put the gear down. The normal extension did not work so I pulled the emergency extension lanyard and the gear extended slowly and all indicated safe.

During this time I also switched to the emergency fuel system and moved the throttle with no change in TPT. I stopcocked the throttle, closed the nozzles and attempted to airstart unsuccessfully, although I got the fuel pressure to 1000#.

Convinced now that the engine had seized, I concentrated on making the runway and it appeared to me at first that I would be successful. I turned base leg about 5-6000'. With the engine siezed I soon realized that my rate of descent was higher than expected so I put the speed brakes in. I don't know whether they came in or not. I'm not sure if the normal hydraulic system was operating at this time but I have a vague recollection of a slight stiffening of the controls followed by normal control action. I continued on my approach and tried to call the tower again but my UHF radio was inoperable.

I passed over the far side of Mascoutah at 2,500' and appeared to be very low for my approach. This altitude is the last one I remember seeing on the altimeter and when I felt I was clear of the town I elected to eject. At this point my airspeed was 150 kts and I had approximately 2500# of fuel on board.

Ejection was successful with both the automatic seat belt and parachute operating before I pulled the D-ring. I don't remember pulling the D-ring but recall I was groping for it as I felt the opening shock I was within a few hundred feet of the ground when the chute opened and only swung about twice before landing in a small backyard in Mascoutah about a foot from a picket fence. A woman in the next yard came out and asked if I was OK and then led me to telephone where I called the 85 Operations and advised them. My neck felt very stiff so I lay down on a couch until the ambulance came."

Some things I later learned was that the UHF was not working because the air start switch was on. The speed brakes did not come in due to failure of the hydraulic system. The stiffening of the flight controls and return to normal was failure of the primary hydraulic system and activation of the battery powered back-up system. The reason the oil pressure gauge failed was that it shared a common shaft with the tachometer. It was the failure of this shaft which caused oil starvation, over-heating of the bearings and subsequent engine seizure. T/O procedure was to leave the throttle in the position it was in if oil pressure failure occurred. That's why the throttle was left at 100% during the descent - until I felt I was in a position to land. The accident investigation board determined the accident was 100% material failure. The only question I was asked about my actions was whether I considered raising the flaps to increase my glide. As you have read, I didn't even remember putting them down! Don't know if it would have made any difference. My observation to the team was that frozen engines don't glide like the windmilling ones we simulated. Also, with emergency gear extension, the gear doors remained down, adding more drag to an already bad situation. The plane hit the ground in a left wing low attitude, rolled through a few backyards and came to a stop short of the next block of houses. Although some debris went through a couple of house walls, there were no casualties except for a small dog. The true miracle, however, was that there was an elementary school across the street from the crash site and school was in session! Beyond the school was nothing but swamps, so if I had trimmed the aircraft better, it would have cleared the town completely as I thought I had when I decided to eject. The neck stiffness was attributed to strained ligaments and I was placed on DNIF until the pain subsided and free movement was possible. Took some leave time and went to Oklahoma City to visit the young lady I had met a month earlier at the National Air Show where the 85 had participated in a fly-by . Convinced her not to worry about her new boyfriend. We were married 40 years last June.

One war story. May '51 Korea. Flying my 44th mission, assigned as element lead in a fit of four .Pre-mission briefing was about 15 minutes of weather and possible enemy troop info. Essentially we were "search and destroy", there was no specific target. if any enemy activity was discovered, we would attempt to destroy it. Emphasis was made that there were no 'friendly' personnel in the assigned sector. The weather was CAVU, we were flying wide-spread finger - formation at about 4,000', shortly after arriving in our target area, someone in the flight transmitted "there's a lot of people in that field at one o'clock". We circled the the field, it was about a mile long, 1/2 mile wide, surrounded by low hills. There were about 50 people, scattered through out...seemed to doing farm work. However the briefing was specifi.. no friendlies and destroy anything of of value to the enemy. used the possibility that they could be



military. I advised the Fit Leader, that I would drop down and take closer look, also told my wingman to stay with the flight. As there were no objections, proceeded down to about 20 feet above the ground, around 325 mph, looking for military age men...saw nothing but old men/women and a few young kids.

Nearing the end of the field, I radioed my observations to lead, started a fairly sharp pullup, at about 200' AGL, saw a circular dug-in 50 caliber machine gun position (assumed it was 50 cal)...in my eleven o'clock position...roughly 200 yds away. Clearly saw several men and the ring-mounted gun...red flashes from the muzzle...pointed straight at my aircraft. Thought,\_"he's got me"...didn't seem likely that the gunner would miss. Since I was committed to a climb, I pulled straight up.. rammed the throttle hard forward .tried to shrink my body "ribbon thin"..thought "hope that steel armor plate behind the seat works" ...spent 10 or so seconds. waiting for something or everything to break loose. When I reached about 4,000', began to think maybe "he hasn't got me",..breathing resumed..running out of airspeed, I nosed over. .leveled out..looked down, damn, if that gunner was not still firing at me. I remember thinking "you son of a bitch, you scared the hell out of me...I'm coming back". I'd been shot at before, on previous missions, ,been "happy" to get out of range...and the wing policy was, except for a close air support mission, if you are shot at..leave (a plane for a gun is not a good trade)...however, that slipped my mind. I was irate that I had been so frightened...and I "wanted" those gunners. So. I rolled my '51 up and over, headed as straight down as I could...put my sight on that still blazing gun muzzle and fixed my six fifties on the gun position...their gun stopped firing before I did. As I pulled out of my dive, my wingman (Lt Luther A Webb) called me with words to the effect of "I saw another gun position firing on as you made your pass". Now, somewhat carried away I rogered him...and said "knock it out". To his credit, he acknowledged...and hit the gun position. As he rolled in on the second gun I saw a third position firing at him...which I proceeded to eliminate (at least, they also stopped firing). Not much more happened..returned to base. After parking the crew chief noted several sheet metal bullet hole damage. During debriefing, Lt Webb identified the gun he hit as a quad-fifty...both guns I hit were singles.

After reading Forrest's tale of the T-33 flight at 50,000 ft (see Fenn's article "My War"), was tempted to write this about when Jim Metz and I got one that high on a trip from Kelly to Yuma on return from a parts pick-up while on rocket deployment.

Had filed VFR on top and the thunderstorms around Marfa , Texas were so high we had to keep climbing to stay above them. Remember the updrafts helping to push us higher as we skimmed their tops. After hitting 47,000 , we wondered if we could get to 50, so kept going.

Had to turn off the flight control boost and turn on the pressure oxygen as we were at 37,000' cockpit altitude and getting the bends in our wrists. Finally, Jim (in the front seat) said we had made it, but told him my altimeter only read 49,100, so he kept it until mine read 50 and his read 51,100'!

We were really on a bubble: lift the nose and we would stall as our indicated airspeed was barely over 120 kts.; lower the nose and we would exceed the limiting mach. After passing Gila

Bend and reporting our altitude as 50,000, the controller asked if we had said 15,000', and was surprised when we confirmed 50,000, and he replied "we were really getting up there."

Letting down was another story. Pulled the throttle back to the stop and it only went down to 93%, so we had to descend rather slowly. Told Jim we should try for a 4 hour flight, but our butts were too sore, so we gave up that idea. Had to turn on the windshield de-ice so we could see out. Good thing the desert air was dry and it cleared without incident. Pull out my flight records to check the exact date and flight time. It was August 14, 1957. The bird was new (a '56 model) and shiny, probably the only reason we made it so high.

28 January 1999

McDonnell-Douglas F-15C-30-MC Eagle. 82-0020, of the 85 Test and Evaluation Squadron, 53rd Wing, piloted by Joe "Corn" Hruska, has mid-air collision at 35,000 feet over the Gulf of Mexico with McDonnell Douglas F-15C-37-MC Eagle. 84-0011, c/n 0920/C314, of the 85 Test and Evaluation Squadron, 53rd Wing, 80 miles S of Eglin over Eglin water range during a 2 versus 3 Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT). Both pilots eject, pilot of 82-0020 slightly injured. Pilots rescued after 45 minutes in the water by MH-53, call sign *COWBOY 22*, on instrument check-flight out of Hurlburt Field.

22 October 1953 The 85 Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, Scott AFB, Illinois, suffers its first fatal North American F-86D Sabre loss when Maj. Yancy Williams crashes after takeoff from Runway 14 in F-86D-20-NA, 51-3029. Williams attempts to turn to the northwest, overshoots the approach to Runway 36, and then attempts a landing in a cornfield west of the base. He almost made it, but the Sabre strikes an electric transformer pole and explodes. The accident investigation shows that the Sabre had a hydraulic elevator control lock due to a misconnecting of hydraulic lines. Williams had been the squadron Material Officer.

The 4485 Test Squadron replaced the 4453rd TTS (T), 33rd TFW on 12 April 1971 and was assigned to the Tactical Air Warfare Center at Eglin AFB, Florida. The squadron operated a pair of 'EG' tailcoded F-4Ds, an RF-4C and a loaned F-4E in late 1977. A yellow fin cap was noted as the squadron's marking on some aircraft. The 'ED' tailcode was used between late 1978 and early 1982, when the 4485 TS receded to 'OT, and received a new black and white checkered fin stripe. Several aircraft of various types were operated together with RF-4C and F-4E. Detachment 5, which was based at George AFB, California, and equipped with the F-4G, initially carried the 35th TFW code of 'WW' before switching to 'OT' with a gray checkered pattern on the fin cap, representing a toned-down version of the black and white checkers.

23 March 1982, An Eglin Air Force Base General Dynamics F-16B Block 5 Fighting Falcon, 78-0112, of the 4485 Test Squadron, crashed into a green at Rocky Bayou Country Club, near Niceville, Florida. The pilot had just finished a test bombing run over Eglin's Range 52 and lost power in the engine. The pilot was able to get the aircraft to an altitude of about 3,000 feet and a speed of between 285 mph and 345 mph before the engine gave out. The pilot, and a weapons officer decided to eject, expecting the F-16 to continue north and crash into a wooded area of the Eglin reservation. According to officer in charge of Eglin's safety office, the dual

ejection caused the plane to roll to the right and slam into the golf course's sixth green, narrowly missing several homes. The two airmen landed on the 18th green and didn't suffer any major injuries. Air Force investigators were able to later watch the entire crash because a chase plane that had been photographing the test mission caught the crash on film. When F-16 experts recreated the accident, they discovered a sequence of control switch moves that would restart an F-16 engine. The procedures were added to F-16 instruction manuals.

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USAF Unit Histories

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